

Strategic Economic Plan 2009 - 2011



Regional
Economic
Development
Boards

Exploits Valley.
Fresh Opportunity.

EXPLOITS VALLEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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Environmental Scan: Zone 12

Geography & Economy

The Exploits Valley region (Zone 12) is located in the heart of central Newfoundland. The pattern of economic development in the region differs somewhat from many regions of the province as it is based on industrial development and natural resources rather than the fishery. While the coastal communities in the region depend on the fishery to a limited degree, it is of much less economic importance than in many other regions.

Zone 12 is comprised of three sub-regions, with diverse but inter-dependent sub-regional economies. The coastal/eastern sub-region¹ is related to the marine environment (fishery, aquaculture), with manufacturing emerging in Point Leamington and tourism becoming increasingly important. Botwood has traditionally served as a shipping port, and efforts are currently underway to divest the port from the federal government and rejuvenate this industry.

The central sub-region² is the industrial, service and government centre for the region and contains the bulk of the population. This area also serves the ever-growing aquaculture industry on Newfoundland's south coast. There is a significant manufacturing sector, particularly in Bishop's Falls.

The interior/western sub-region³ has traditionally been dependent on mining and forestry. The mining sector has experienced significant growth, spurred by the start of production at the Duck Pond mine in early 2007.

Zone Profile: Demographic and Labour Force Trends

Notable demographic information for Zone 12 is presented below. All data has been collected from *Community Accounts* and unless otherwise indicated is based on 2006 census data. Most regional trends are consistent with provincial trends.

- **Total population:** 26,450. From 2001 to 2006, the total population *declined* by 1.8%; a much less drastic decline than the 8.1% population decrease in the previous five year period. This is compared to a provincial decline of 1.5% from 2001 to 2006.
- **Median Age:** 44 years. This is an increase from 40 years in 2001, signalling an ageing trend. This is consistent with the provincial trend, where the median age increased from 38 years in 2001, to 42 years on 2006.
- **Employment**⁴: For the population aged 18 to 64 years, the employment rate in Zone 12 in 2005 was 70.5%. For those aged 25 to 54 years, it was 78.5%. Comparatively, the provincial rates were 76.7% and 82.9% respectively.

1 Botwood, Peterview, Northern Arm, Fortune Harbour, Cottrell's Cove, Point of Bay, Point Leamington, Glover's Harbour, Leading Ticks and Norris Arm

2 Grand Falls-Windsor, Bishop's Falls

3 Badger, Buchans, Buchans Junction and Millertown

4 Employment rate is defined as the ratio of total individuals of a given age reporting at least one week of work in the year, to the total population of the same age.

- **Average individual income:** \$26,200. This represents an increase from 2001 when average individual income was \$21,500. Provincially, average individual income was \$28,800 (in 2006), up from \$23,500 in 2001. Regionally and provincially, income has shown a consistent, positive trend since 2001.
- **Employment insurance incidence⁵:** **34.4%** (in 2007), compared with a provincial rate of 33.7%.
- **Income support incidence⁶:** **12.2%** (in 2007), although incidence of income support in Zone 12 have shown a continuous decreasing trend, this is slightly higher than the 2007 provincial rate of 10.5%.
- **Percentage of population (aged 18-64) with a certificate, diploma or degree:** **70.5%** (as compared to a provincial rate of 74.9%).

Changing Economic Realities

The pulp and paper industry was a source of significant employment in the Exploits Valley for over 100 years. This was driven by the presence of a newsprint mill located in Grand Falls-Windsor, which was most recently operated by Abitibi Bowater. The Grand Falls-Windsor mill provided high paying jobs, as well as regional employment and spin-off in areas such as logging/silviculture, transportation and other supporting services.

In December 2008, AbitibiBowater announced the closure of the mill in Grand Falls-Windsor for March 2009. The mill closure has resulted in not only job loss, but also the loss of a legacy and regional identity related to the paper-making and logging industry upon which much of the region was founded.

There is much to be hopeful about in Zone 12, however, particularly:

- increased tourism opportunities and activity in the coastal sub-region, particularly in the communities of Botwood, Leading Tickles and Norris Arm;
- recent public and private sector investments in the cranberry industry;
- continued mineral exploration, particularly in the western sub-region;
- funding to explore genetic research in Zone 12;
- increased interest in adventure tourism, cultural tourism opportunities, advancement of the arts, and heritage preservation throughout the Zone;
- other opportunities that are being explored to further diversify the economy

The long-term effects of the mill closure remain to be seen, creating an ever-changing environment for economic development practitioners. The EVEDC remains committed to seeking diversified, innovative and creative opportunities upon which to build a sustainable regional economy.

5 Defined as the number of people receiving EI during the year divided by the number of people in the labour force (Community Accounts, 2009).

6 Defined as the number of people (including dependants) receiving income support during the year divided by the total population.

Context For Plan: Guiding Principles & Approach

Guiding Principles

Based on the preceding environmental scan, the guiding principles and overarching goals for the EVEDC's approach to regional economic development are as follows:

- support economic diversification;
- encourage and facilitate innovative thinking and creative ideas;
- create conditions for private investment and small business development, and;
- identify and utilize the competitive advantages of each sub-region.

All initiatives will be undertaken with recognition that benefits to any part of the region benefit the region as a whole, and the knowledge and experiences of a diverse selection of partners strengthens our efforts. As reflected in our diverse Board of Directors, the EVEDC will partner with other organizations to achieve goals in a synergistic, collaborative manner.

The EVEDC is committed to undertaking all activities in positive and pro-active manner.

Strategic Plan Development Approach

The strategic economic plan (SEP) and subsequent work plans have been developed through public consultation and research. More specifically, the opportunities in this plan are a result of the following activities:

- Well advertised, public consultation sessions in Badger, Botwood and Grand Falls-Windsor in June 2009, as well as a public invitation for written submission on development ideas and/or general input.
- A cultural tourism opportunities identification session held in Norris Arm, June 2009 including representation from government, economic developers, the tourism sector and the arts community.
- Regular discussion at committee levels and board meetings, including a staff retreat to develop new ideas.
- Informal interviews with key stakeholders, including municipal representatives, members of the business community and government officials.
- Consultation with youth on new ideas for Zone 12.
- Ongoing staff research and brainstorming sessions.

Many key themes were identified throughout these sessions and the resulting SEP is reflective of the feedback received. Among common themes were: tourism – making the best use of Zone 12's assets, particularly the river, aboriginal history, Red Indian Lake and creating unique and memorable experiences for visitors. Additional discussions related to diversified economic opportunities, particularly for smaller communities.

Operations & Accountability

Operations: Implementing the Strategic Plan

The EVEDC is run by a diverse board of directors, complemented by three full-time staff (Executive Director, Economic Development Officer, Administrative Assistant). Additional staff are often hired on a temporary basis where projects are undertaken that include human resources funding.

For each sector of opportunity that has been identified in the strategic plan, a corresponding sub-committee exists (or will be formed) and will meet on a monthly basis to oversee progress on work plan initiatives. For this SEP, sub-committees include:

- Tourism
- Natural Resources
- Education and Youth
- Business and Innovation

Other committees will meet on an as needed basis, including: municipalities committee, policy and procedures committee and human resources committee. The board executive will meet on a monthly basis and/or when it is not possible for the entire board to meet.

Accountability, Monitoring & Evaluation

To ensure accountability to funding partners and stakeholders, the work of the EVEDC will be continuously evaluated and monitored. This will be done by the following means:

- The development of an annual work plan based on the strategic plan; work plan to include details on: initiatives, expected outcomes, resources/partners, tasks and timelines and progress/status update boxes.
- Executive Director and Economic Development Officer will submit monthly, written reports on work plan progress to all board members.
- Review of progress on work plan action items at each monthly sub-committee meeting, followed by monthly report to board.
- Quarterly reviews with funding partners (ACOA, INTRD), followed by briefing to board on meeting outcomes.
- Written record of work plan progress in quarterly "status box" on work plan.
- Annual audited financial statements.
- Any other reporting or controls as prescribed by funding partners and as per organization's Policy & Procedures Manual.

A presentation of sectors of opportunity and associated goals and objectives will follow.

⁷ For further information on board composition, job descriptions and other details on operations, please consult the *EVEDC Policy and Procedures Manual*.

Sectors of *Fresh Opportunity*



- *Tourism* ■ *Business & Innovation*
- *Natural Resources* ■ *Tourism* ■ *Education & Youth*

Tourism

Overview

Newfoundland and Labrador's tourism industry is growing and is an increasingly important source of revenue and employment. Newfoundland and Labrador is building a reputation for providing a kaleidoscope of unique, authentic travel activities that provide memorable visitor experiences. Branding itself as a destination for all seasons, the people of this province continue to work towards building a sustainable and competitive tourism industry with priority on developing cultural tourism experiences to meet the needs of visitors who are interested in experiencing local culture first-hand.

Provincial and regional snapshot:⁸

- In 2007, an estimated 490,100 non-resident visitors contributed approximately \$357 million to the NL economy.
- Tourism creates over 12,730 sector-related jobs annually and supports 2,400 small businesses.
- NL was named a "Top 30" travel destination for 2008 by Lonely Planet, a globally respected travel guidebook.
- Rural communities are the heart and soul of NL, and the foundation of travel experiences - by investing in our tourism industry, we are investing in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, keeping communities alive and vibrant.

Sustainability

Developing tourism experiences that are authentic and unique to Newfoundland and Labrador will be key to building a sustainable tourism industry.

Focus for Zone 12

The EVEDC has embraced tourism development as a key component of its work plan. There is a need to refresh tourism products to meet the needs of a changing marketplace and create a healthy and vibrant sector.

Experiential tourism enables communities to take advantage of their heritage, culture, and natural resources in new ways. There is much potential for growth in this sector for Zone 12. Industry growth can be harnessed not only for the enjoyment of tourists themselves, but to maximize local economic benefits and thus increase the living standards of host communities. The following opportunities have been included with this goal in mind.

“Our region has all the ingredients which any tourism destination needs – the physical product based on our unique history, a vibrant arts and culture sector, our fabulous riverfront location and a welcoming people to ensure the visitor experience is the very best that we have to offer.”

8 All statistics sourced from: Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation. "Uncommon Potential.: A Vision for Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism". Accessed August 24, 2009 from: http://www.tcr.gov.nl.ca/tcr/publications/2009/Vision_2020.pdf

Tourism: Developing Red Indian Lake

Rationale

Red Indian Lake and surrounding area is a relatively untapped resource that offers great potential for experiential and adventure tourism. Development will be approached at a grassroots level, including preliminary research, consultation and opportunity identification.

Goal	To identify opportunities to utilize Red Indian Lake and increase regional visitation with particular focus on adventure tourism, experiential tourism and season extending activity.
Objective 1	Conduct research, including attending best practice missions, on developing experiential, authentic tourism opportunities for Red Indian Lake and area (Fall 2009, ongoing) .
Objective 2	Establish a working group including representation from accommodations/tourism industry, municipalities, local heritage societies and other appropriate stakeholders to generate and discuss development ideas and review research conducted by EVEDC (Fall 2009) .
Objective 3	Hold opportunities identification capacity building session with working group and appropriate stakeholders (Winter 2010) .
Objective 4	Pursue top ranked-opportunities as determined by work detailed in objectives 1-3. EVEDC will provide assistance with subsequent meeting facilitation, idea refinement, funding identification and proposal writing (Winter 2010, ongoing) .
Measurable Outcome(s)	Identification of <u>three</u> realistic opportunities appropriate to the region to be pursued and facilitated with assistance from EVEDC.
Potential Partners	Tourism/accommodations industry players, municipalities in western sub-zone, Dept. of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, Department of Innovation, Trade & Rural Development (INTRD), Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), Central Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) groups and associations where appropriate (i.e., heritage societies, snowmobile clubs, etc.).

Tourism: Enhancing Cultural Tourism

Product Offerings

Rationale

Zone 12 is home to breath-taking scenery and unique attractions. Unfortunately, Central NL is often by-passed in favour of other destinations throughout the province. The ability to offer tourists experiences that are unique, authentic and region-specific will help to brand Zone 12 as an attractive destination.

Many of the objectives listed below are a result of the cultural tourism *opportunities identification* session held in Norris Arm in June 2009. The regional arts festival was the highest ranked opportunity that emerged from this session.

Goal	To offer tourists high quality cultural tourism products that are authentic, unique and specific to Zone 12.
Objective 1	Conduct feasibility study on hosting a pilot regional visual arts experience that is international in scope (Fall 2009/Winter 2010)
Objective 2	Research heritage preservation opportunities/tourism products that are unique to Zone 12, including but not limited to logging legacy, etc. (Ongoing) .
Objective 3	Establish partnership and begin implementation of new ideas. (Spring/Summer 2010) .
Measurable Outcome(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-researched, documented information on the feasibility of new regional ideas for Zone 12. Establishment of networks and partnerships with key stakeholders that will assist with implementation of new ideas. Developed action plan and/or initial implementation of new ideas.
Potential Partners	Regional heritage and arts organizations, artists and crafts people, municipalities, Dept. of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, Heritage Canada, The Rooms Corporation, ACOA, INTRD, Central DMO.

Tourism: Helping Municipalities Make the Most of Local Festivals

Rationale

Many communities in the Exploits Valley host local festivals and economic development practitioners are often called upon to provide assistance and advice. Community festivals can serve as excellent tools for attracting tourists to communities, which results in localized economic activity. Hosting a well-organized festival encourages repeat visitation which helps to support local business, artists and crafts people and tourism operators.

Goal	To provide tailored resource materials to help municipalities in the Exploits Valley host memorable festivals that encourage increased tourism visitation and support the local economy.
Objective 1	Survey all communities in Zone 12 to gather data on experiences with local festivals and to determine what information will help municipalities improve local festivals (Fall/Winter 2009, 2010) .
Objective 2	Based on data collected from municipalities, create a community festival best practice guide for municipalities in Zone 12. Information in guide may include, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a mandate and vision, • defining target market for festival patrons, • available resources and how to conduct funding research, • funding application tips, • engaging in collaborative efforts and partnerships, • volunteer management, etc. (Winter/Spring 2010).
Objective 3	Develop workshop based on guide book to present material to communities in Zone 12 (Spring 2010) .
Objective 4	Support the Flying Boat Festival International (FBFI) by facilitating an annual post-festival review and idea generation session for upcoming festival; help FBFI committee identify funding opportunities (Fall, annually) .
Measurable Outcome(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a best practice guide that is tailored to the needs of communities in Zone 12. • Creation and delivery of associated workshop(s). • Annual FBFI review session.
Potential Partners	Municipalities and local service districts, festival organization committees/organizations, Dept. of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, ACOA, INTRD.

Tourism: A Multi-Purpose Space for Arts & Heritage

Rationale

Many arts and heritage organizations in Grand Falls-Windsor and the region are challenged by the lack of a venue – a reality which detracts focus from organizations’ core activities. Several like-minded organizations have held a series of meetings to discuss the idea of establishing a multi-disciplinary shared centre. This project will benefit not only Grand Falls-Windsor, but the entire region as a number of engaged organizations are regional in scope.

Goal	To establish a multi-purpose venue in Grand Falls-Windsor to be shared by numerous arts and heritage-based organizations.
Objective 1	Host a resource leveraging session to enable engaged groups the opportunity to identify resource sharing opportunities that will contribute to a more financially sustainable approach to securing a multi-purpose space (Fall 2009) .
Objective 2	Work with engaged arts and heritage groups to identify collaborative funding opportunities that may assist in the establishment of a multi-purpose space (Fall/Winter 2009) .
Measurable Outcome(s)	The establishment of a multi-purpose space to be used by groups in Grand Falls-Windsor and throughout the region.
Potential Partners	The GF-W Heritage Society, Harmsworth Public Library Board, Central NL Visual Arts Society (CNVAS), Town of Grand Falls-Windsor, Multicultural Society, Exploits Indian Band Council.

Tourism: Visitor Interception & Signage

Rationale

In 2007, TRACT Consulting completed a *Regional Tourism Visitor Interception Master Plan* for Zone 12 in an effort to increase tourism visitation. A large component of this strategy is the usage of consistent signage and imagery throughout the region. Due to a provincial signage review, implementation of this strategy was deferred. Implementation will be contingent on assurance of alignment with the new provincial signage strategy.

Goal	To seek opportunities to implement the <i>Regional Tourism Visitor Interception Master Plan</i> and/or elements of the plan in Zone 12.
Objective 1	Apply for funding for strategy implementation (timeline pending review of new provincial model) .
Measurable Outcome(s)	Implementation of plan, or appropriate elements of plan, as prescribed in TRACT Consultants' report.
Potential Partners	Municipalities, Dept. of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, local tourism attractions, Dept. of Transportation and Works, Dept. of Government Services, ACOA, INTRD, Central DMO.

Business & Innovation

Overview

Business and innovation are essential components in the creation of a sustainable, diversified economy. Zone 12 is home to a number of businesses that contribute to the regional economy and serve as models of creativity and entrepreneurial spirit:

- Hi-Point Industries, Bishop's Falls: produces innovative oil absorbent products as well as horticultural peat moss for export throughout the world; Hi-Point is now entering the cranberry farming business.
- FUNdamentals Family Fitness Centre, Grand Falls-Windsor: a gym that offers opportunities for families to exercise together; also offers youth programs and services;
- Exploits Pelletizing, Bishop's Falls: manufactures wood pellets using waste material from sister company Blanchard's Cabinet Doors.

Sustainability

Creating a climate that encourages innovation and new business is a fundamental principal of economic development. In essence, innovation is synonymous with sustainability – if a region's industry and employers are not adaptive and innovative; the economy is simply not sustainable.

Focus for Zone 12

The EVEDC is committed to creating conditions for new business, and encouraging creative and innovative ideas. Valuing and recognizing local businesses that are "doing it right", and creating a positive climate to welcome new investment is critical. Particular attention is placed on small business, which is the backbone of our provincial and national economy.

Creating a climate for new businesses to thrive, and promoting the Exploits Valley as "open for business" are reflected in the following opportunities.

“Innovation is the ability to see change as an opportunity – not a threat.”

Business & Innovation: Supporting Small Business

Rationale

Small business is the backbone of the economy. Providing supportive services for small business start-up and expansion will help strengthen and diversify the regional economy.

Goal	Support small business start-up and expansion by offering a Micro Business Development Pilot Program in partnership with the NL Federation of Cooperatives and the Community Business Development Corp. Central.
Objective 1	Continue delivery of Micro Business Development Pilot Program with program partners.
Measurable Outcome(s)	Number of micro business groups established at end of pilot project.
Potential Partners	NL Federation of Cooperatives, Community Business Development Corp. Central, INTRD, members of program's Local Area Committee.

Business & Innovation: A Positive Way Forward - Creating a Climate for Business

Rationale

The Exploits Valley has recently been affected by the challenges of industry closure. As the region works to overcome these challenges, emphasis on the positive aspects of the Exploits Valley must not be overlooked. Promoting the positive attributes of Zone 12 will contribute to the overall business climate, and will brand Zone 12 as a desirable place to live and work.

Goal	To emphasize the positive attributes of the Exploits Valley in an effort to market the region as a desirable place to live and work.
Objective 1	Develop and launch a positive, creative marketing campaign based on proposed theme "The Exploits Valley. Fresh Opportunity." (Fall, Winter 2009/2010, ongoing) .
Objective 2	Organize event to promote and celebrate innovative businesses, products and entrepreneurs operating in the Exploits Valley (Spring, Summer 2010) .
Measurable Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of innovative marketing campaign. • Hosting of event.
Potential Partners	ACOA, INTRD, Service Canada, business community, various community organizations.

Business & Innovation: Exploring New Opportunities

Rationale

Exploring opportunities for new business and industry is of particular importance in Zone 12 given the recent loss of industry. Looking for new and innovative businesses will support economic diversification.

Goal	Determine options for economic partnership between the Exploits Valley and Ireland as initiated in the 2007 MOU signed by representatives from the Flying Boat Festival International and delegation from Ireland.
Objective 1	As per the previously developed request for proposal, secure funding to enlist consultant advisory services to study potential for economic linkages between Ireland and Zone 12 (Fall/Winter 2009, 2010) .
Objective 2	Pending recommendations in study, create action plan for follow-up on identified opportunities (Spring 2010) .
Measurable Outcome(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receipt of funding and completion of economic linkages study. • Creation of action plan for opportunities that may be identified.
Potential Partners	Ireland Business Partnership/INTRD, Flying Boat Festival International, ACOA.

Goal	Based on the success of previous e-waste recycling projects facilitated by EVEDC, to determine how the EVEDC and region might support a broader, provincial e-waste strategy.
Objective 1	Host meeting with the Multi Materials Stewardship Board (MMSB) to share EVEDC's experience with e-waste recycling, and to determine role the EVEDC and region might play in a broader recycling model (Fall 2009) .
Objective 2	Follow-up on any proposed actions arising from meeting.
Measurable Outcome(s)	Meeting held, resulting action items (if applicable) documented and planned.
Potential Partners	MMSB, Department of Environment and Conservation, Central Waste Management Authority, Service Canada.

Natural Resources

Overview

The economy of Newfoundland and Labrador is heavily dependant on our rich natural resources. Activity in industries such as oil and gas, mining, forestry, electricity generation, fisheries, aquaculture and agriculture has provided wealth to this province for many years. Zone 12 has traditionally benefited from the forestry and mining industry.

Provincial and regional snapshot:

- Together, the mines and energy sectors are the largest source of revenue for the province: in 2006 these sectors accounted for \$9.2 billion of the province's GDP.⁹
- Provincially, farm cash receipts for crops totalled over \$17 million in 2008.¹⁰
- Teck's Duck Pond mining operation near Millertown began commercial production in 2007; exploration by other companies is ongoing.
- Provincial and federal funding totalling \$5.2 million will support 11 cranberry farmers in Zone 12; will result in 120 acres in production.
- The Coast of Bays region currently has six finfish businesses in operation, with a total export value of \$50 million in 2008 with forecasts of increasing global demand. Many companies in Zone 12 currently provide goods and services to this active industry.
- Although the forestry industry in central NL has been greatly impacted by the closure of the AbitibiBowater mill, efforts to seek alternative uses for available fibre resources are ongoing.

Sustainability

Sustainability carries the utmost importance in the natural resources sector. It is only through prudent use of natural resources that the economy can thrive for years to come. The EVEDC strongly feels that consultation and dialogue among industry players, as well as effective strategic planning are essential components of natural resource sustainability.

Focus for Zone 12

One of the main focuses for the natural resources sector will be providing support to private industry to facilitate growth. This is reflected in the following opportunities.

9 Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Natural Resources, Strategic Plan 2008-2011. Accessed August 24, 2009 from: http://www.nr.gov.nl.ca/nr/plans/strategic_plan_2008.pdf

10 Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Natural Resources, Farm Cash Receipts. Accessed August 24, 2009 from: http://www.nr.gov.nl.ca/agric/mark_stats/pdf/farmcashreceipts.pdf

“ The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased, and not impaired, in value.”

- Theodore Roosevelt

Natural Resources: Facilitating Procurement in the Exploits Valley

Rationale

Many natural resource-based industries operate in the Exploits Valley and surrounding regions, particularly in the areas of mining, aquaculture and agriculture. A variety of goods and services are required to support these sectors. Providing a forum that allows suppliers and purchasers the opportunity to connect will strengthen local businesses and support regional industry.

Goal	To support local procurement by natural resource-based industries by connecting businesses via an ongoing, web-based supplier development forum that is subscription-accessed.
Objective 1	Conduct a preliminary survey to determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> goods demanded by companies engaged in: mining, aquaculture and agriculture (with a particular focus on the newly emerging cranberry industry); local supply of related goods (Winter/Spring 2010)
Objective 2	Develop an easily maintained, user-friendly supplier development forum on the web – a venue that allows users to list “want to buy” and “able to supply” goods and services that are appropriate to industries of focus (Spring/Summer 2010) .
Objective 3	Promote and launch new site; engage in direct advertising campaign to companies identified in <i>Objective 1</i> (Fall 2010) .
Objective 4	Monitor, evaluate and modify supplier forum on ongoing basis (Winter/Spring 2011) .
Measurable Outcome(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development and launch of a web-based supplier development forum. Record of forum activity (number of subscriptions) and user feedback. Increased local purchasing by companies in targeted industries (as determined by surveying).
Potential Partners	Business community, ACOA, INTRD, Service Canada, Industry Canada.

Natural Resources: Supporting Cranberry Industry Development

Rationale

The cranberry industry in the Exploits Valley shows great promise, and is an important means of economic diversification. Recent public-private partnerships to promote the growth in this industry are encouraging. Attention to activity that will provide continued support to this emerging industry will help local farmers and supply industries.

Goal	Conduct a feasibility study on the establishment of a secondary processing facility for cranberries and other related berries/foods in Zone 12 which can be used as an investment attraction tool as farming activity increases.
Objective 1	In conjunction with industry stakeholders, secure funding and develop a request for proposals for consultant advisory assistance (Fall 2010)
Objective 2	Oversee completion of study (Winter/Spring 2011) .
Measurable Outcome(s)	The completion of a secondary processing study for usage by local industry.
Potential Partners	Farming community, Department of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, NL Federation of Agriculture, ACOA, INTRD.

Goal	Increase the level of formal research and development conducted in Zone 12, particularly related to cranberry industry, to support industry knowledge base and growth.
Objective 1	Establish working group to review best practices and research related R&D facilities (Spring 2010) .
Objective 2	Develop series of suggested opportunities to increase R&D to support berry farming industry (Summer 2010) .
Measurable Outcome(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The identification of opportunities to increase level of R&D conducted in Zone 12. Increased R&D activity in Zone 12.
Potential Partners	Farming community, Department of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, NL Federation of Agriculture, Memorial University, College of the North Atlantic.

Education & Youth

Overview

The continued out-migration of well-educated youth threatens the vitality and viability of communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. Our communities are thus challenged to find ways to retain young people, particularly in rural NL. Furthermore, an educated and skilled workforce is a precursor to economic growth.

Provincial and regional snapshot:

- In 2008, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador announced the development of a *Youth Retention and Attraction Strategy* to counter the negative impacts of youth out-migration, strengthen the labour market and support the economic development of the province.¹¹
- Education Budget (K-12 and Post-Secondary) from the 2008/09 fiscal year was \$1.1 billion.¹²
- Newfoundland and Labrador's public institutions have some of the lowest tuition rates in Canada. Tuition rates are frozen at these levels until 2011/12.¹³
- There are currently 4 post secondary educational institutions located in Zone 12, including 1 public and 3 private training institutions.

Sustainability

Youth retention and attraction is a very important aspect of the future sustainability and economic growth in our region. Zone 12, like most other parts of the province and Canada, is experiencing a number of demographic and economic challenges.

Focus for Zone 12

The EVEDC understands the integral relationship between an educated, skilled work force and economic development, and supports opportunities for youth in Zone 12 to access education and to be engaged in their communities. The EVEDC also recognizes the importance of investment in research and development activities in the creation of a sustainable regional economy. These priorities are reflected in the following goals.

“In the new economy, information, education, and motivation are everything.”

– Bill Clinton

11 Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Education ,The Industry Coordinating Committee, Progress Report Accessed August 24, 2009 from: http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/postsecondary/skillstaskforce/icc_progress_report.pdf

12 Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Education. Accessed August 24, 2009 from: <http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/postsecondary/fastfacts.html#institutions>

13 Ibid.

Education & Youth: Engaging Youth In Economic Development

Rationale

The engagement of youth in regional economic development is an important means of building community capacity and promoting youth retention. Many young people have creative ideas to offer their communities, yet lack a communication medium. Communities of the future are dependent on the participation of today's youth.

Goal	To allow youth the opportunity to suggest ideas for economic development and youth retention in the Exploits Valley.
Objective 1	Host regional speak-off for youth on subject matter related to economic development ideas for Zone 12; speak-off to include high-profile judges and questioners (Spring 2010) .
Measurable Outcome(s)	A successful, well-attended speak-off that encourages youth-community dialogue on economic development issues.
Potential Partners	Regional secondary and post-secondary schools, regional youth-based organizations.

Goal	To promote youth engagement in economic development, and to highlight opportunities "close to home" to promote youth retention.
Objective 1	Host series of well-advertised, quarterly "youth info nights" featuring guest speakers followed by a networking session. Topics to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • starting your own business, • dialogue with your community council, • participation in municipal politics, • volunteerism, etc. (Fall 2009, ongoing).
Measurable Outcome(s)	The delivery of four "info nights" per year that are well-attended and useful to participants (as determined by periodic feedback surveys).
Potential Partners	Regional secondary and post-secondary schools, regional youth-based organizations.

Education & Youth: Valuing Education & Research As Pillars Of Economic Development

Rationale

Education and research is a crucial component of economic development. Establishing linkages between post-secondary institutions and encouraging research activity in Zone 12 will contribute to a knowledge-based, sustainable economy.

Goal	Encourage university research in Zone 12 by continuing to partner with Memorial University's Harris Centre.
Objective 1	Facilitate meetings as required with researchers from Memorial University and identified research participants in Zone 12 (ongoing) .
Objective 2	Continue to follow-up on opportunities identified at Fall 2007 Harris Centre workshop (ongoing) .
Measurable Outcome(s)	Increased research partnerships between Memorial University and stakeholders in Zone 12.
Potential Partners	Harris Centre, Memorial University.

Goal	To ensure the rich archaeological history in Zone 12 is appropriately explored and documented.
Objective 1	Organize a meeting with representatives from Memorial University's archaeology program to discuss future plans for exploration in the region and how work might be facilitated
Measurable Outcome(s)	Linkage established with Memorial University on potential archaeology research.
Potential Partners	Harris Centre, Memorial University.

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